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508

3 October 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Operations

SUBJECT: Suggested Response by the Director  
[REDACTED] Regarding the  
Agency's Purported Role in the  
Chilean Coup

1. Despite the uninformed speculation rampant in certain international circles as well as some of the news media, the Agency did not play any role in the 11 September 1973 military coup in Chile. Specifically, we did not stimulate or support any moves against the Allende government via our contacts in the military, the political opposition, and the private sector. Nor did we in any way support the strikes and work stoppages of the truckers and other organizations which eventually precipitated the coup. Charges that we were in some way involved in the unfortunate death of Allende are also completely unfounded. While the circumstances of his death are not entirely clear, the weight of evidence to date indicates that he probably did commit suicide.

2. In the wake of Allende's inauguration in 1970, CIA's role in Chile was confined to providing funds and influencing, to the extent we could, opposition political parties and media. The basic purpose of this program was to keep the opposition to Allende alive and active by providing it with the means and encouragement to resist. The hope was that this political rear-guard action would be effective enough to hold a reasonably fair presidential election in 1976 which would turn the government (Allende) candidate out.

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3. In all, \$6.5 million was authorized by the 40 Committee for support to the opposition during the Allende regime. The lion's share of this support went to the political parties and media. Support to the private sector organizations was limited to several undertakings in the 4 March 1973 congressional elections. And, if one is to accept the testimonials of our contacts in the opposition political parties and media, plus our Station's observations, there is little question that this assistance was vital.

4. In short, while CIA did support the political opposition to Allende throughout this period, it was quite careful to avoid any actions or activities which could be construed as promoting or advocating a coup d'etat.

/s/ David A. Phillips

David A. Phillips

Chief

Western Hemisphere Division

  
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